

14
K..
840. l. 10
14
M O M U S,

A

P O E M;

OR A

CRITICAL EXAMINATION

INTO THE

MERITS of the PERFORMERS,

AND

COMIC PIECES,

AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL in the HAY-MARKET.

L O N D O N:

Printed for the A U T H O R,

And Sold by J. ALMON, opposite Burlington-House, PICCADILLY,

And J. WILLIAMS, No. 38, next the Mitre Tavern, FLEET-STREET.

39
4 13
128



M O M U S.

NO more shall Monkey's mimicry engage,
No more shall Cats and Dog usurp the stage *,
See *Momus*' sons, a single unit higher,
Divert the town with his detraactive fire,
While patents royal are to *Merit* thrown,
To please Sir *F—n—s* and a tasteless town.

See *F—te* the foremost of the mimic race,
Amuse the town with scandal and grimace,
While private characters each scene adorn,
Held up by him to meet the public scorn.

B

Where

* Alluding to Signior *Placido's* Monkey, &c.

Where custom's brought on some peculiar mode
Of speech, or air, out of the common road;
If but deficient in a leg or eye,
Or, from misfortune, chance to look awry,
This *maimed* mimic, favour'd so by fate,
That he might still more truly imitate;
With self-vain zeal a stupid laugh to raise,
He with a low audacity conveys
His borrow'd puns, with a farcastic face,
(Join'd by the meanest of the acting race)
Without restraint his dearest friends expose,—
But *F—te* and friendship are eternal foes.

Never did folly, with such sway, maintain
Her seat, and, with her baby rattle, reign
Over *Apollo* and his laurell'd sons
With *glees* and *catches*, *mimicry* and *puns*.
Like the loud Quack, in some small country town,
Who, with his fool, entices ev'ry clown

To .

To see his pranks, and filthy drugs to vend,
And, with a *puff*, their quality commend :
So *F—te* like him, his own loud trumpet blows,
And, with a *puff*, his trash for wit impose ;
As wrecks and rubbish follow ev'ry tide,
So ev'ry blockhead joins the laughing side.

Blest with a face of humour, to engage
At once a drooping, and a laughing age,
Sh—t—r with some pretensions to a name,
Stands forth distinguish'd in the book of fame :
The grateful public will for humour take
Whatever blunder he may chance to make,
Who, fond of laughter, oddity and whim,
Have fix'd the mask of Comedy on him.

With face by *Bacchus*, or by *Venus* marr'd,
For he's with both the mighty powers warr'd ;
In word expressive, and in gesture dry,
In action simple, with a meaning eye,

See *Weston* gravely force the hearty smile,
 Nor pall with low buffoonery the while :
 Whene'er in *Sneak* or *Drugger* he appears,
Garrick attends with patient eyes and ears,
 And owns his humour natural and true,
 For *Garrick* must give genius her due.

See *D—e D—s* better half the year
 A mere poltroon—a hero now appear !
 Unnotic'd and obscure he struts unknown,
 An utter stranger to the injur'd town,
 Till *F—te*, his patron, impotent and *wise*,
 At once convinces each beholder's eyes,
 That merit oft beneath oppression dwells,
 For see how *D—s* now himself excells.
Aimwell, *Cassio*, nay, and many more,
 Such parts were never acted so before,
 And that my Muse may shew her meaning plain,
 Hopes ne'er to see 'em murder'd so again.

An arrant stroller, from the lord knows where,
A true itinerant, now here, now there,
Who oft from barn to barn, from town to town,
Ten nights has labour'd for a single crown ;
See *B—nn—r* assume (unaw'd by shame)
A mimic's vile and despicable name ;
There's no degree of acting, all allow,
So very puerile, infamous or low ;—
For who e'er knew a mimic yet inherit
The smallest grain of genius or of spirit ?
And has it not for ever been a rule
To join a mimic's name with that of fool ?
The laughing-stock of candour and of fame,
A very monkey with a human name ;
But joins not he then in a blockhead's cause,
That yields them favour, or that gives applause ?
Each man of reason, and of judgment, must
Confess it neither laudable or just.—
B—nn—r a *Wilkinson* would be,
But can't so truly imitate as he.

To ape the manner of some better play'r,
An act ungen'rous, at the best, unfair ;
Why should one actor villainously try
To damn another in the public eye ?
Either by malice or by envy led,
To hurt his brother in his fame or bread ?
When to the world 'tis evidently known,
He ne'er could boast a method of his own.
Such are a pest and scandal to the stage,
And who but *F—te* would any such engage ?
Why don't the candid and insulted town,
In justice, cry these imitators down ?
For all must own the stage was ne'er design'd
To point at this, or that, but all mankind.
E'en devotees must own the stage of use,
Where it don't leave *instruction* for *abuse*.

Lead by conceit, and fond of stage applause,
Yet stands condemn'd, if judg'd by acting laws ;

With

With face, nor voice, nor action, to commend,
Or win one single auditor his friend;
See *S—w—n*, great in capitals appear,
Disgust the eye and grate the dullest ear;
For he most surely, of all human kind,
Was ne'er by nature for the stage design'd:
Long in *Hibernia* has he trod the field,
Where judgment oft to prejudice must yield,
And with no small indulgence and regard,
Tho' ev'ry night some noble part he marr'd.
See him return, declining, and in age,
Riding, his only Hobby-Horse, the stage,
And with a boyish zeal the toy embrace,
Tho' time with years has wrinkled o'er his face.

Of vulgar accent, and of bully's *pink*,
A rolling fiddle, with a *knowing wink*,
Coarse and robust, who might perhaps engage,
Had he been cast on the *Broughtonian* stage:

P—l—r, self-confident, attempts to please,
In high-wrote parts of elegance and ease ;
But like to him, who roll'd the stone in vain,
Will ne'er the fummit of his hopes attain ;
Yet must we own him some small share of praise,
When *Bruin*, *Loader*, and such parts he plays ;
He's sure to please while in this line he steers,
For in such parts he still *himself* appears.
Then let him ever in that track remain,
Where he is sure, some small applause to gain,
And never more in gentlemen and beaux,
Disgrace the stage, the author, and the cloaths.

Barry, each season, might delight the town,
But that we've better actors of our own :
Yet think not *Barry* that I will disgrace,
Or mean to herd thee with the common race ;
Thou art an *Actor* ev'ry judge must own,
And many years a fav'rite of the town,

Till *Powell* chanc'd within thy walk to tread,
And pluck'd the blooming laurel from thy head :
Yet in *Othello* must each actor yield,
There even *Garrick* must give up the field,
And own thee for the part, by nature fram'd,
We think of *Barry* when *Othello's* nam'd.

Not so thy son, when in each part he tries,
To copy thee, too oft from nature flies ;
Yet will it faintly bear the name of fault,
To follow close the manners we are taught :
From thee, his ev'ry method he conceiv'd,
From thee, each beauty and each fault receiv'd,
Nor should we deem him destitute of art,
Did he with decency perform *one* part.

O could my ardent, yet unwilling Muse,
Obtain one kind and plausible excuse,
And, without censure, be indulged to spare,
And overlook the errors of the fair—

But chaste *Astrea* guides my feeble hand,
And will not listen to my warm demand.

Blest with a form of elegance and ease,
Two requisites that must for ever please,
Who for a season might perhaps engage,
When *Yates*, awhile, retires from the stage:
See *Dancer* now each high-rate part possess,
And try to picture virtue and distress,
But judgment seems to leave her in the dark,
Whene'er she aims to hit the doubtful mark.

With bold presumption, in despite of shame,
J—ff—s attempts to join the rank of fame,
And void of judgment, attitude and speech,
She aims at characters above her reach;
When poor *Alicia* with distraction raves,
And calls for racks, for thunderbolts, and graves;
Did *Cinderilla* ever scold so well,
When in her airs she bid you *go to h—ll*?

When

When drove by love and passion to despair,
And having lost all hopes, begins to swear;
So sad *Alicia*, when by *J—ff—s* play'd,
A mere impetuous termagant betray'd.—
Forgive me *J—ff—s* that I speak my mind,
True satire never leaves one fault behind;
But since she's brought thy errors forth to view,
So shall she speak of thy perfections too.
In third-rate parts, where nature don't require
Such skill in action, or such force of fire,
When nor by pride nor by ambition led,
Content the paths of moderation tread,
There spite of censure shalt thou justly raise,
The smile of pleasure and the voice of praise.

See one in parts of wit and humour, strive
To catch the manner of a *Pope* or *Clive*;
For *G—d—r* the copyist betrays,
In ev'ry part of humour that she plays,

And

And from her acting it is plainly shewn,
She likes their manner better than her own ;
But fuch, a barren genius declares,
Who, having no invention, borrows theirs.

Oglevie's pretty and genteel, I own,
And has some little sparks of genius shewn,
Time and instruction may in her produce,
With some small pains, an actress of use.

Behind appear a despicable race,
Without one single requisite or grace,
Beneath the notice of my honest Muse,
And, but to mention, would herself abuse.
Names both to genius and to fame unknown,
'The needy stragglers of each country town ;
Fit but to form some necessary group,
Or to compleat *F—te's* miserable troop,
When furnish'd out with truncheons and with cloaths,
See 'em a *royal company* compose.

By

By these enforc'd, and arm'd with impudence,
See him invade the boundaries of sense,
Break thro' the rules of genius and taste,
And lay, with ridicule, their kingdoms waste;
Pleas'd with his own, behold the mocker strive,
With some success, his *Grub-street* to revive,
And ev'ry season palls us with the same,
Till jaded patience sickens at his name.
Each man of candour, must in this agree,
His merit lies in inconsistency;
In art theatric, destitute of skill,
Yet makes a figure in a puffing bill;
In this judicious, 'tis a crafty snare,
To catch the vulgar, and to make 'em stare;
Pleas'd with the promise of the joyous fun,
Away to *F—te's* the herd unthinking run;
He gains his riches at the fool's expence,
Despis'd and shunn'd by ev'ry man of sense.

High on *Parnassus* wou'd he wish to ride,
 And, unrestrain'd, the winged courser stride;
 But is it not most evident to all,
 The limping Bard has had a fatal fall.
 A famous play-write wou'd he seem to be,
 A very Phœnix to posterity.—
 Grief! that his name must with his body die,
 And all his bantlings with their father lie,
 When, lacking his distortion and grimace,
 Their sole protection and their only grace,
 Spurn'd and detested in some wiser age,
 Will never more get footing on the stage.

Of these, the *Minor*, at the head we see,
 Born at the time of his necessity;
 When threaten'd by the horrors of a j—,
 Was forc'd to hoist up ev'ry tatter'd sail;
 And must have sunk had not the tortur'd *Cole*,
 (Who, like a Pirate, he unjustly stole)

Buoy'd

Buoy'd him, when sinking, to the welcome shore,
And fav'd at once his vessel and his store.

The *Lyar* too, *his master-peice confess'd**,
A very fustian-jacket at the best;
At *Covent-Garden* long ago cry'd down,
His'd and condemn'd by the insulted town.

The *Mayor of Garret* next we bring to view,
Which we must own both laughable and new,
But candour will admit of no excuse,
Where she beholds such personal abuse.

His *Patron, Commissary*, even all
His drolls, beneath this censure fall.

His *Orators*, a very hodge-podge see,
Made up of rubbish and absurdity,

Cramm'd

* *Vide* one of his Puffs in the *Gazetter*, on *Thursday*, the 9th of *July*.

Cramm'd full of puns, of nonsense and parade,
 With neither plot, or meaning to its aid :
 And while to wit he makes a false pretence,
 Or tries to introduce one line of sense ;
 With vain attempt he stammers at the task,
 A very *Midas* in *Apollo's* mask.

These grown quite thread-bare, and worn out with age,
 Like *F—te* himself, a nuisance to the stage,
 He's brought his *Taylors*, like a thrifty friend,
 To botch their elbows and their linings mend ;
 With royal sanction force 'em on the town,
 When they are sick of better treatment grown.
 Did *Smithfield* e'er produce a bill so rare,
 When *Punchinello* was the hero there ?
 Did ever *Flockton's* tragedy excell ?
 Was ever shew-bill drawn up half so well ?
 Did ever Quack with such parade engage ?
 Not even *R—k* when he adorn'd the stage :

Did

Did Taylor e'er with patchwork form a coat,
And without *measure* too, as *F—te* has wrote ?
Did ever play-write exercise his quill
With *half* that *humour*, or with *half* that *skill* ?
And stock'd, like him, with *true poetic lore*,
Write such a *Taylor's tragedy* before.

Try'd, and condemn'd by th' indulgent town,
The father won't his new-born idiot own :
But fain wou'd bribe the bawdy muse its mother,
To lay the frightful monster on another,
To drop it at some door, or else to smother. }
Yet if with close inspection you shou'd trace
The striking outlines of the infant's face,
The father's strong resemblance you'll behold,
As die to die, cast in the self-same mould.

As Epicurians with luxuriant waste,
Who lose at once their appetite and taste,

And try to teaze the stomach ev'ry hour
 With something sweet, or else with something sour;
 Or when the rake is quite indiff'rent grown,
 Sated with all the pleasures of the town;
 See him from place to place with transport fly,
 In search of pleasure and variety.
 When sick of *high life* he begins to grow,
 He tries to find a relish in the *low*;
F—te next arises to his vacant mind,
 For there he's sure the coarsest fare to find;
 Tho' coarse, yet light, and easy to digest,
 Nor hurt the head before it meets the breast.
 No heavy sentence to perplex the brain,
 No searching morals on the mind remain,
 But like the froth, dissolving in the taste,
 And, ere it meets the lip, begins to waste:
 While in our ears he dins the mighty pother,
 It enters one, and hurries out at t'other.



C H A R T E R

OF THE

W E S T I N D I A N

OF THE

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N

W E S T I N D I A N